# Canada Issues "Winter Sports" Set

On February 3rd, Canada Post issued a set of stamps with a Winter Sports theme. Although the February 3 issue date is just a few days before the opening of the February 7 Sochi, Russia, Winter Olympics, there is no reference to the Olympics in the stamps or in the news releases.

This is most likely because a satisfactory financial arrangement could not be made with the International Olympic Committee, whose demands have been known to be excessive and have caused other nations in the past—including the U.S.—to issue generic sports during Olympic years.

The announcement for this issue stated, "In a year when Canadians will be focused on winter sports excellence, Canada Post is shining the light on three history-makers and record-breakers. Each woman honored in this set of stamps has changed the face of her sport and left an indelible mark on the memories of her fans."

The release also quotes Louis Gagnon, Creative Director and Partner with Montréal's Paprika, who designed the stamps, that "The illustrations represent the athletes in full action, which contrasts with the simplicity of the design. The vibrant, powerful style reflects the prowess of the three champions.…The setting features an element that reminds us of the athlete's sport – and the colour scheme is influenced by the colors of the Olympic logo." (However, the stamps do not bear the logo.)

Also addressing the need for royalties negotiations, according to Stamp Program Manager Elia Anoia, "both the production process and the final result are also dependent on the cooperation and involvement of the families, foundations and archives that act as keepers of the memory of the women recognized here.…the families are thrilled by the fact that we are honoring these Canadian women with a stamp."

The three honorees are;

Barbara Ann Scott: Known as "Canada's Sweetheart," Barbara Ann Scott inspired generations of Canadians to lace up and brave cold outdoor rinks to perfect their spins, jumps and figures. Early in her career, she won countless national and international prizes, then captured the gold medal in the women's singles figure skating event at the St. Moritz 1948 Olympic Winter Games, in Switzerland—a feat no other Canadian woman has achieved since.

The Scott Official FDC is cancelled in her hometown of Ottawa, Ontario.

Sandra Schmirler: The skip of one of the most successful teams in Canadian curling history, Sandra Schmirler, along with Jan Betker, Marcia Gudereit, Joan McCusker and spare Atina Ford, topped multiple national and international wins with the first-ever Olympic gold medal in women's curling on February 15, 1998, against Denmark at the Nagano 1998 Olympic Winter Games.

The Schmirler Official FDC is cancelled in Biggar, Saskatchewan, Schmirler's birthplace.

Sarah Burke: Born in Barrie, Ontario, in 1982, freestyle half-pipe world champion Sarah Burke was the first woman to land a 1080-degree spin (that is, three complete spins) in competition. She won four gold medals at the 2011 Winter X Games, plus one more at Europe's Winter X Games. She also successfully lobbied for the inclusion of her sport in the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics.

The Sarah Burke stamp Official FDC is cancelled at Whistler, British Columbia, where Burke spent much of her time training and coaching.

A total of 200,000 of each stamp was printed by Lowe-Martin and issued in separate booklets of ten stamps each. In addition, 200,000 souvenir sheets containing each of the three stamps was issued.

For more information on this issue and to purchase the recent new issues of Canada, please visit the Official Canada Post website, **http://www.canadapost.ca/shop/**.